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PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

Biological Society of Washington.—February 11, 1888.—The following communications were read:—Dr. Theo. Gill, "Character of the Family *Elacatidæ*;" Mr. Robt. T. Hill, "The Variations of *Exogyra ponderosa* Say;" "The Variations of *Gryphæa pitcheri* Morton;" Prof. C. V. Riley, "The Insectivorous Habits of the English Sparrow;" Dr. C. Hart Merriam, "A New Fox from California."

February 25, 1888.—The following communications were read: Mr. F. W. True, "Changes in the Catalogues of North American Mammals since 1879;" Dr. T. H. Bean, "Distribution and Some Characters of our Salmonidæ;" Dr. Cooper Curtice, "Some Early Stages in the Life History of *Tœnia pectinata*."

March 10, 1888.—The following communications were read:—Mr. F. W. True, "Changes in the Catalogue of North American Mammals since 1877," Part II.; Dr. Geo. Vasey, "Foreign Trees and Shrubs Cultivated in the District of Columbia;" Dr. Theo. Gill, "The Classification of Cottoidean Fishes;" Dr. C. Hart Merriam, "Description of a New Species of American Skunk;" Mr. Robt. T. Hill, "The Southwestern Termination of the Atlantic Timber Belt."

March 24th.—Dr. Cooper Curtice spoke of "*Tœnia fimbriata*, a New Parasite of Sheep;" Mr. Charles Hallock, "Reversion of Domesticated Animals to a Wild State;" Capt. J. W. Collins, "The Work of the Schooner Grampus in Fish Culture."

Appalachian Mountain Club.—Boston, January 3, 1888.—Prof. David P. Todd, of Amherst College, gave a paper describing his ascent of Friji-San, Japan, in connection with the recent eclipse expedition. The lecture was illustrated with stereopticon views.

January 10, 1887.—Annual meeting. The report of the secretary showed a total membership of 788, a gain of 15 during the year. In 1887 there were held nine regular, six special, and one field meeting. There were besides ten excursions. The following board of officers were elected: President, Augustus E. Scott; vice-president, Rest F. Curtis; recording secretary, Roswell B. Lawrence; corresponding secretary, Frank W. Freeborn; treasurer, John E. Alden; councillors—Natural history, George Dimmock; topography, George H. Barton; art, John Ritchie, Jr.; exploration, Frank O. Carpenter; improvements, Frederick D. Allen; trustee, for three years, Charles W. Kennard. After the result had been announced, Miss L. S. Davis gave an account of the dedication of the monument to De Saussure, and Mr. L. L. Hubbard made a few remarks concerning the convention at Villach, which he attended as delegate of the club. On Saturday, January 14, the club visited Pasture Hill, and on the 21st an excursion was made to Mt. Benedict.

Society of Arts.—Boston, January 10, 1888.—Prof. W. T. Sedgwick read a paper entitled "A Biological Examination of the Water Supply of Newton, Massachusetts," it being a record of joint work done on the subject by the speaker and Mr. S. R. Bartlett. A description was first given of the filter basin near the Charles River, from which the Newton supply is taken. A striking difference was found to exist between the river and basin water. Water from the river gave as an average 261 colonies of Bacteria in a cubic centimetre; that from the basin, 42; from the reservoir, when the water is pumped, 23; and that taken from the tap in Newton, only 6. The following results bear out the opinion that Newton's water supply is superior. Newton water was thus found to contain 6 micro-organisms in a cubic centimetre; Spot pond, Malden, 10; Cochituate, 43; Mystic, 204; Croton, N. Y., from 54 to 256. The chemical tests also justified the reputation of the Newton water for purity.

The next paper, also read by Prof. Sedgwick, explained a "New Method for the Biological Examination of Air," by Prof. Sedgwick and Mr. G. R. Tucker. A description of the previous methods used for this purpose was first given. In the new method the air is drawn through a small tube containing granulated sugar, the sugar being then mixed in an enlargement of the same tube, with a proper amount of gelatine to insure the growth of any germs held by it. The apparatus for drawing always the same amount of air through the tube is an ingenious one, and is the invention of Mr. Tucker. It has been found by numerous experiments that the sugar catches all the Bacteria of the air. The apparatus is simple in construction and working, and is designed to be used in hospital wards and at any place where frequent examinations of the air are desired. It was shown in working order, and a large number of plates and tubes showing micro-organisms in various stages of development were exhibited.

American Philosophical Society.—May 20, 1887.—A paper from Prof. S. S. Stevenson, entitled "Notes on the Surface Geology of Southwest Virginia," was presented.

September 2, 1887.—The following communications were read: On "Biela's Comet and the Large Meteors of November 27–30," by Prof. Dan. Kirkwood, Bloomington, Ind.; On the "Systematic Position of the Mallophaga," by Prof. A. S. Packard, Providence, R. I. "Preliminary Report of the Vertebrate Fossils of the Uinta Formation, collected by the Princeton expedition of 1886," by Profs. W. B. Scott and Henry T. Osborn, Princeton, N. J.; Dr. D. G. Brinton read a paper entitled "Were the Toltecs an Historic Nationalty."

September 16, 1887.—A paper by Dr. A. C. Stokes, of Trenton, N. J., on some "New Fresh-Water Infusoria was presented."

October 7, 1887.—Prof. Cope presented a communication for the proceedings entitled the "Classification and Phylogeny of the Artiodactyla." Two communications from Mr. S. Garman, of Cambridge, Mass., entitled "Reptiles and Batrachians of Grand Cayman," and "West Indian Reptiles in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Mass.," were read.

October 21, 1887.—Mr. P. C. Garrett read an obituary notice of Pliny-Earle Chase, LL. D., a vice-president of the Society. A paper on "Octonary Numeration and its Application to a System of Weights and Measures," by A. B. Taylor, was presented. Prof. Cope read a paper on the "Phylogeny and Classification of the Artiodactyla. Dr. J. Cheston Morris spoke of the remarkable resemblance between Devonshire sheep and goats, both ewes and bucks had horns and, like the goat, they had more than one period of reproduction in a year. Dr. D. G. Brinton, H. Phillips, Jr., and M. B. Snyder, were appointed a committee to consider the value of *Volapük.*

November 4, 1887.—Dr. Brinton read a paper on the so-called *Alaguilac* language of Guatemala.

November 18, 1887.—A paper entitled "Notes on the Ethnology of British Columbia," by Dr. F. Boas, was presented through the Secretaries. Dr. Brinton read an account of "An Ancient Human Footprint from Nicaragua," and in the discussion that ensued Prof. Heilprin stated that in his belief the deposit in which it occurred was Post-pliocene. Prof. E. J. Houston read a communication on a non-magnetizable watch invented by M. C. A. Palliard, of Geneva, Switzerland; and on the Gramophone, an invention of Edwin Berliner, of Washington, D. C. Prof. E. F. Smith presented a paper on "Electrolysis of Lead Solutions."

December 2, 1887.—Prof. D. Kirkwood, of Bloomington, Ind., presented a communication on "The Possible Existence of Fireballs and Meteorites in the Stream of Bielids."

January 6, 1888.—The committee of *Volapük* presented a supplementary report. Prof. P. H. Uhler, of Baltimore, read a paper on "The Albirupian Formation and its Nearest Relatives in Maryland." Profs. Lewis and Heilprin, in the discussion which followed, differed from Prof. Uhler in their views of the age of this formation, Prof. Lewis considering it as Silurian, Prof. Heilprin as Palæozoic and not Mesozoic.

WESTERN SOCIETY OF NATURALISTS.—A Western Society of Naturalists, embracing members from Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Missouri, was organized at Indianapolis, Dec. 29th, 1887. Its scope is like that of the American Society of Naturalists, the constitutions of the two being almost identical. The following officers were elected:—President, Professor S. A. Forbes, of Champaign, Ill.; Vice-Presidents, Professor W. J. Beal, of Agricultural College, Mich., Pres. T. C. Chamberlain, of Madison, Wis., and Professor Henry L. Osborn, of Hamline, Minn.; Secretary, Dr. J. S. Kingsley, of Bloomington, Ind.; Treasurer, Dr. John M. Coulter, of Crawfordsville, Ind. It was voted to hold the annual meetings of the Society in October, the first one to be held at Champaign, Ill. The first meeting was for organization and had no regular programme. Various members discussed methods of biological investigation and instruction. Dr. S. A. Forbes exhibited a number of pieces of microscopical apparatus in use in the Illinois State University and especially adapted for drawing microscopic objects.

BOSTON SOCIETY OF NATURAL HISTORY, December 21, 1887.—The meeting was devoted exclusively to the Antiquity of Man in America. Professor F. W. Putnam exhibited a series of palæolithic implements found in the gravels at Trenton, New Jersey, by Dr. Abbott; in the gravel of the Little Miami Valley, Ohio, by Dr. Metz, and in the glacial deposit at Little Falls, Minnesota, by Miss Babbitt; also, for comparison, several from the gravel of the Valley of the Somme. Dr. Charles C. Abbott gave an account of the recent discoveries in the Trenton gravels and their bearing on the antiquity of man in North America. Professor G. F. Wright spoke upon the age of the Ohio gravel-beds in which the implements were found by Dr. Metz. Mr. Warren Upham read a paper upon the recession of the ice sheet in Minnesota in its relation to the gravel deposits overlying the quartz implements found by Miss Babbitt at Little Falls, Minnesota.

A discussion upon the Antiquity of man in the eastern and central portions of America followed the reading of the papers.

January 4, 1888.—Professor W. O. Crosby discussed the Geology of the outer islands of Boston Harbor. Mr. James H. Emerton described the Anatomy of the Chrysalis of the Milk Weed Butterfly.

February 1, 1888.—Mr. E. O. Jordan, of the Institute of Technology, read a paper on the beginnings of natural history in America.

February 15, 1888.—Dr. Geo. L. Goodale read a sketch of the life and work of the late Dr. Asa Gray.

March 7, 1888.—Professor W. O. Crosby read a paper on the geology of the Black Hills of Dakota.

March 21, 1887.—Professor F. W. Putnam described the great serpent-mound in Ohio, and Dr. J. W. Fewkes discussed the origin of the present form of the Bermudas, both papers being illustrated by the stereopticon.

ESSEX INSTITUTE, March 19, 1888.—Professor F. W. Putnam spoke of the serpent-mound in Adams county, Ohio, which has recently come into possession of the Peabody Museum of American Archæology and Ethnology, at Cambridge, Mass. This mound was first brought to general knowledge by Messrs. Squire and Davis in 1849, previous to which time it had only a local reputation. It was then covered with forests, and has since been ploughed over a number of times and devoted to crops. The mound is lowest at the tail and increases in height toward the head, and varies from four to nine feet; in width it varies from eleven to twenty-one feet, and its length is about fifteen hundred feet. The serpent makes four or five convolutions, running north and south, and the tail ends in a triple coil. In front of the mouth is an oval mound, as though the serpent were about to swallow an egg—as the lecturer expressed it. On each side of the neck are two other mounds—one natural, growing out of the decay of an enormous oak tree, and the other artificial. Near the tail is another mound, built up from the white clay bottom, over which is a heavy layer of stones—not the limestone of the surface, but a sandstone brought from a creek a quarter of a mile away. In this mound, at a depth of from two to five feet, occur a considerable number of intrusive burials; but in the centre, lying at length on four inches of wood-ashes, was found the skeleton of a chief six feet in height, with a brain capacity greater than that of Daniel Webster. The speaker believed the mound to have been built in honor of this chief. The skeleton is in good condition, and is now preserved in the Museum at Cambridge. No weapon was found in the mound and no ornament, except one fresh-water clam-shell.